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1 May 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT : Agency Positions Classified GS-16, 17 and 18

1. PROBLEM.--Standardization of Agency practices in creation of and appointment to positions classified GS-16, 17 and 18. Justification for number of positions in Agency presently established as super-grades.

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM.

a. The Classification Act of 1949 and the Defense Production Act of 1950 authorized 650 classified positions in grades GS-16 through 18 for the United States Government. Under the present law, the President must approve all GS-18 positions, and the other so-called super-grade positions must be approved by the Civil Service Commission.

b. As of 26 March 1952, there were [] super-grade positions in the Central Intelligence Agency, broken down as follows:

25X9

GS-18
GS-17
GS-16

25X9

c. This total, in comparison with the over-all total authorized for the entire Government, would seem to indicate an overstaffing of super-grades to CIA. In recent budget hearings, representatives of the Bureau of the Budget have commented on the number of super-grades in CIA and informally cautioned against over-grading.

3. DISCUSSION.

a. The Comptroller General on 15 November 1949 ruled that CIA was exempt from the Classification Act of 1949 and that his office would interpose no legal objection to the establishment of super-grade positions in CIA regardless of the over-all Government numerical limitations. Accordingly, the first group of super-grade positions [] was established in the Agency, effective 25 December 1949. Since then the number has increased to the present total of []

25X1

25X9

25X9

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b. The proportion of super-grade positions to approved positions of the Agency is only .729%. The agency with the highest ratio of super-grade positions is the Small Defense Plants Administration with positions in this category constituting 9.62% of their total personnel. Actually, twelve activities of the Government have a greater percentage of super-grade positions than CIA. (See Annex A)

c. A study, by title only, of the types of positions approved by the Civil Service Commission for classification at the super-grade rate reveals that a somewhat uniform pattern is followed by the Commission in determining the grade-level. In general, for example, Bureau and Office Heads, Executive Assistants and Solicitors are classified GS-18. Comptrollers, General Counsels, Assistant Directors, are usually at the GS-17 level, while Personnel Directors, Management Officers and Division Heads are examples of positions approved at GS-16. Without actually studying the job descriptions for these positions it appears that CIA fairly well follows the same pattern. (See Annex B)

d. Other factors contributing to the number of super-grades required in CIA are (1) the relatively few statutory positions created for the Agency by Public Law or Executive Order, such as the Assistant Secretaries and Under Secretaries of other Government Departments; (2) the restrictions on the personal life of employees required for security reasons; and (3) the unusual functions and objectives of the Agency requiring highly specialized talent capable of commanding more lucrative salaries in private industry.

e. The Civil Service Commission, in approving the original 650 positions recommended for the entire Government, required a very complete and comprehensive presentation for each position. This presentation included functional statements, charts, directives, and position descriptions and evaluation of duties. The establishment and allocation of these positions to the various Government agencies was a coordinated project of the Bureau of the Budget and the Civil Service Commission. To justify any additional positions at this level a regular Government activity must receive the sponsorship of the Bureau of the Budget, prepare a very elaborate and convincing presentation to the Civil Service Commission, and then obtain approval of the Congress. This has been accomplished in a few isolated cases, and the total now is 674.

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f. In comparison, the creation of a super-grade position in CIA is relatively simple. Personnel actions involving grade GS-18 must be initiated personally by the Deputy Director under whose jurisdiction the position is located, be reviewed by the Assistant Director (Personnel), and referred to the Director for approval. Personnel actions involving grades GS-16 and GS-17 need only be initiated by the Office Head concerned. After review by the Personnel Director, approval of the proper Deputy Director is sufficient authorization (CIA Regulations

g. No over-all super-grade ceiling has been established for the Agency, and documentation of these positions would probably not meet the standards required by the Civil Service Commission in approving the initial group of positions.

4. CONCLUSIONS.

a. That the present number of positions classified at the super-grade level is not excessive and can be justified before the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress.

b. That there appears to be a tendency within the Agency towards the creation of more and more super-grades which, if not controlled, might lead to abuse.

c. That the Agency procedure and practices for the establishment of super-grade positions, particularly grades GS-16 and GS-17, are inadequate and do not meet the strict standards required of other Government activities.

d. That documentation of these positions is also inadequate and probably would not meet Civil Service requirements.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

a. That minimum standards and requirements be developed for each grade level over GS-15.

b. That a high-level Committee or Board be appointed to assure that the adopted requirements and standards are met and to review the justification for the establishment or reclassification of any position to a super-grade level.

c. That the initial establishment of any position classified over grade GS-15 be approved by the Director or his Deputy, after favorable review by the Board.

d. That appointments to, or other collateral personnel actions, involving a position classified grade GS-18 be approved by the Director or his Deputy.

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25X1

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e. That personnel actions affecting a position classified grade GS-16 or GS-17, after the position has been approved by the Director or his Deputy, be approved by the Deputy Director having jurisdiction over the position.

f. That the present super-grades be reviewed and documented by functional statements, charts, directives and position description in conformity with Civil Service requirements.

L. K. WHITE
Assistant Deputy Director
(Administration)

TMF:jdc

Att:

Tabs A through E
(Annexes)

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

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